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NORTHEAST DEALS WITH LABOR PROBLEMS

Shen-yang -- The privately operated Chien-hsing (Restoration) Iron Works has signed a labor contract with its workers mutually satisfactory to both sides.

The laborers at a democratic assembly (min-chu ta-hui) secured: (1) no dismissal of workers without cause; (2) 8-hour working day in winter, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ -hour working day in summer; (3) night overtime work not more than five times in a month and not more than 3 hours at a time with triple pay; (4) a 40-percent increase in wages; (5) two paydays a month, with wages computed on the basis of commodities; (6) first and 15th of every month will be rest days; (7) apprentices will be given examinations semiannually and awarded pay rises according to advancement in skill; (8) time off with pay for weddings and funerals; (9) hospitalization with full pay for injury on duty. Men crippled shall be given such work as they are able to perform, at their regular rate of pay.

The workers agreed to (1) abide by factory rules, (2) report for and leave work at the appointed time, (3) refrain from pilfering, (4) refrain from wasting materials, (5) work conscientiously, and (6) meet the shop's reasonable production goals.

By this contract the interests of both sides are guaranteed. The shop manager is planning to add 100 more soon and construct a workers' bathhouse. The workers have agreed to increase production.

Beilungkiang -- The manager of the privately owned T'ung-feng Lumber Shop in T'ai-an overworked his men (16 hours a day), told claimants they could quit, opposed union organization in his shop, and discharged men without cause. He was brought before a union arbitration meeting and made to confess his faults, restore the discharged men to their jobs without loss of pay, and pay a fine for manufacturing certain goods without a permit.

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MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES -- Tung-pei Jih-pao, 18 Mar 49

Shen-yang -- A number of problems and irregularities have appeared in the campaign to increase labor-union membership.

In some cases there has appeared a tendency to exclude some and in other cases a tendency to practice forced enrollment.

During the Manchukuo and KMT period of oppression, some workmen ignorantly joined the Chia-li Society. Since the liberation it has been made clear that they were not involved in any political movement, but members are very loath to sponsor these old workers. The plans committee has called a special meeting to discuss this problem. The committee men were instructed to explain the real basis of membership in the shops and try to clear up the confusion.

In the uniform factory the organizers have been too particular toward women workers, disqualifying them for very minor reasons, so that out of 300 workers only 15 were enrolled. In three production units not one had been enrolled, much to the dissatisfaction of the workers. The committee decided to be less particular and increase the enrollment as fast as possible.

In some cases the workmen have thought that filling out the application blank automatically made them members and about 400 people counted themselves members on this basis during one week. It was necessary for the membership committee to explain again the basis for membership.

In setting up a plans committee in the nail factory, prospective members were required to fill out a record of their life history, from their eighth year of age, before eligibility would be considered. This and other similar practices are out of harmony with labor-union organization principles.

LABOR BUREAU RULES GOVERNING INSURANCE -- Tung-pei Jih-pao, 18 Mar 49

The General Labor Bureau of the Northeast Executive Committee, on 12 March 1947, promulgated measures governing payment into the labor insurance fund. The measure is effective as of March 1949. Text of the regulations is as follows:

The seven major industries beginning labor insurance activities on an experimental basis will make payment into labor insurance fund in accordance with the following rules:

1. Beginning with March 1949, each industry shall set aside 3 percent of its payroll for the labor insurance fund; 70 percent shall be kept by the industry's treasurer of labor insurance funds from which to make payments under the law, and 30 percent shall be deposited in the local branch of the Northeast Bank as a general reserve fund.

2. For the sake of convenience, each factory or unit of the industries will make the fund payments individually (for example, the control bureau for railways, mining affairs bureau for mines, each factory in the textiles industry, etc.), but the general Labor Insurance Fund Committee of each industry will prepare a combined report which will include for all units the number of laborers, the total payroll figure and the insurance deduction, the amount paid and the percentage of deduction, amount held in the industry and percentage, amount in the bank and percentage, etc. This report shall be sent to the Northeast General Labor Union and to the Northeast Executive Committee General Labor Bureau.

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3. Each industry may make its bank deposits on the insurance fund in cash, but the bank shall convert the funds into goods according to the regulations governing deposit of commodities at the local rate according to the current value of wage units and keep the goods in the warehouse of the Northeast General Labor Union for the labor insurance reserve fund.

4. The amount of the current month's insurance fund payment by each industry shall be based on the payroll for the previous month, but the payment shall be reckoned at the rate at the time of deposit [for conversion purposes.]

5. The current month's payment to the insurance fund should be made in one payment before the end of the month, but in no case later than the fifth of the following month. In case of late payments, the rate shall be that of the month during which payment is made and the Labor Bureau will warn or discipline the offender.

WAGE PAYMENTS IN KIND -- Tung-pei Jih-pao, 23 Mar 49

Ha-erh-pin -- Since its opening in November 1948, the Ha-erh-pin United Workers' Consumer's Cooperative has been assisting four Ha-erh-pin employers, with an employee force of about 2,000 workers, in the administration of the 70 percent payment of workers' salaries in goods. Each employer goes to the cooperative and gets salary credit slips to cover his payroll needs. The cooperative then takes the receipts given by the employer for the slips he has received to various factories and receives goods in exchange. The goods are placed in stock by the cooperative. On payday the workmen receive 70 percent of their pay in cooperative salary slips. With these slips they can go to the cooperative store and exchange them for the goods they desire. Cooperative members who have a letter of authorization from their employer may exchange the slips for cash.

By handling goods in large quantities and by opportune dealing, the cooperative is able to give the members fresh goods at the best prices and maintain its own capital.

LABOR REPRESENTATIVES CONFERENCE -- Tung-pei Jih-pao, 20 Mar 49

The Chi-lin (Kirin) city government called a two-day conference of labor representatives from the various government-operated industries in the city. Twenty-five organizations were represented by 51 delegates.

The topics discussed fall under two general heads:

1. Management and Plant

a. It was stated that some managers are lacking in production experience, and are unfamiliar with handling materials so as to avoid wastage.

b. Some plants are finding it difficult to obtain raw materials. The municipality should endeavor to aid in this matter.

c. There is need for an increase of plant buildings, warehouses and machinery. More attention should be given to fire-prevention measures.

2. Wages and Welfare

a. The general level of wages set by the Northeast Executive Committee is too low.

b. Some plant managements have been making unexplained deductions from wages.

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c. Hospital facilities for workers and families should be designated and arrangements made for favorable rates.

d. Schools for workers' children are needed.

e. The municipality and general labor organization should assist in promoting union activities and raising the cultural and production levels of the workers.

The chiefs of the social welfare and finance offices assured the delegates that a conference of managers and superintendents would be called soon to thresh out these problems.

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